

**Notice of Allowability**

Application No.

10/071,575

Applicant(s)

SMITH ET AL.

Examiner

Art Unit

Vitali Korobov

2155

**-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--**

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to amendment filed on 6/23/06.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1, 2, 4-12, 15-17 and 35-42, renumbered as 1-22.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some\* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☒ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- (b) ☒ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date 20060911.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)                                | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application                     |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)                       | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),<br>Paper No./Mail Date _____ |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),<br>Paper No./Mail Date _____    | 7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment                   |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit<br>of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance  |
|  | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____   |

  
SALEH NAJJAR  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

### **DETAILED ACTION**

1. This Office Action is in response to the amendment filed on 06/23/2006. Claims 1, 9, 35, 36, and 37 were amended. Claim 3 has been cancelled. New claims 38-42 have been added. Accordingly, claims 1, 2, 4-12, 15-17 and 35-42 are currently pending and have been examined in this Office Action.

### ***Drawings***

2. The drawings are objected to because of the following informalities:

Paragraph [0011] of the disclosure states that the "Fig. 1 is a diagram illustrating an exemplary prior art computer display visualization of threaded posts or messages in a threaded information system such as a newsgroup". However, Fig. 1 is not labeled as prior art.

The objection to the drawings will not be held in abeyance, and a replacement drawing of Fig. 1 with appropriate corrections must be submitted and received by this Office no later than the payment of the issue fee.

### **EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT**

3. An Examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to Applicants, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it **MUST** be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

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4. Authorization for this Examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with the Attorney for the Applicants Mr. Richard Lyon, Reg. No. 37,385 on September 11, 2006.

5. The application has been amended as follows:

**(A) In the Specifications:**

Page 4, paragraph [0012] has been amended to read:

[0012] Fig. 2 is a flow diagram of a participant evaluation method for automatically evaluating participants in computer mediated persistent conversations[[]] according to the present invention.

Page 7 line 2:

The browser executable code "**http://netscan.research.microsoft.com**" has been replaced with **--"netscan.research.microsoft.com"--**.

**(B) In the Claims:**

Claim 1. (Currently amended) In a computer mediated persistent conversation system having one or more computers with which each of multiple users author and post messages in one or more conversations, the system including a computer-readable medium that stores computer software instructions for operating the system, the instructions comprising:

obtaining selected information from the one or more conversations;

storing the selected information and forming from it aggregated conversation data that includes aggregations according to time, conversation, and authoring user;

tagging the messages when they are posted by authoring users, wherein tagging

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a message comprises inserting a tag into the message, wherein the tag identifies the message as being of one or more selected message types comprising a Question message type indicating that a message is a question and an Answer message type indicating that a message is an answer to a Question message type, whereby the tagged messages allow said users to decide whether a conversation is likely to provide useful information; and

providing the aggregated conversation data and message type tags to users of the computer mediated persistent conversation system.

Claim 5. (Currently amended) The system of claim 4 in which the plural aggregations according to plural time periods or resolutions include aggregations according to ~~two or more of~~ the time periods or resolutions: day, week, month, quarter, year, year-to-date.

Claim 35. (Currently amended) A method for mediating persistent conversations between multiple people who author and post messages in one or more of the conversations comprising ~~for~~ the actions of:

obtaining selected information from the one or more conversations;

storing the selected information and forming from it aggregated conversation data that includes aggregations according to time, conversation, and authoring person;

tagging the messages when they are posted by authoring people, wherein tagging a message comprises inserting a tag into the message, wherein the tag

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identifies the message as being of one or more selected message types, comprising a Question message type indicating that a message is a question and an Answer message type indicating that a message is an answer to a Question message type, whereby the tagged messages allow said people to decide whether a conversation is likely to provide useful information; and

providing the aggregated conversation data and tags identifying the message type to the people.

Claim 40. (Currently amended) A process for mediating one or more persistent conversations between multiple people who author and post messages in one or more of the conversations comprising process actions for:

obtaining selected information from each conversation;

storing and aggregating the selected information in different ways including aggregations according to time, conversation, and authoring person;

tagging the messages when they are posted by authoring people, wherein tagging a message comprises inserting a tag into the message, wherein a the tag identifies the message as being of one or more selected message types, comprising a Question message type indicating that a message is a question and an Answer message type indicating that a message is an answer to a Question message type, whereby the tagged messages allow said people to decide whether a conversation is likely to provide useful information;

providing the aggregated information and message type tags to the people.

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Claim 41. (Currently amended) The process of claim 40, wherein the one or more selected message types further comprise at least one of:

~~a Question message type indicating that a message is a question;~~

~~an Answer message type indicating that a message is an answer to a Question message type;~~

a Closed message type indicating either that a message of the Answer message type resolves a message of the Question message type, or that a selected reply message resolves an initial message.

a Review message type indicating that a message is a review of book, article, film or other piece of work;

an Event message type indicating that a message identifies a past or future event;

a FAQ message type indicating that a message identifies Frequently Asked Questions;

a Claim message type indicating that a message includes particular claims made by the authoring person; and

a Code Sample message type indicating that a message includes software code and supporting information about the software code.

## **REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE**

6. Claims 1, 2, 4-12, 15-17 and 35-42, renumbered as 1-22, are allowable over the prior art of record.

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This communication warrants no examiner's reason for allowance, as applicant's reply makes evident the reason for allowance, satisfying the record as whole as required by rule 37 CFR 1.104 (e). In this case, the substance of applicant's remarks in the Amendment filed on 23 June 2006 with respect to the amended claim limitations and further amended claim limitations in the Examiner's Amendment submitted herein, point out the reason claims are patentable over the prior art of record. Thus, the reason for allowance is in all probability evident from the record and no statement for examiner's reason for allowance is necessary (see MPEP 13202.14).

7. Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

#### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the Examiner should be directed to Vitali Korobov whose telephone number is 571-272-7506. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Friday 8a.m. - 4:30p.m..


If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Saleh Najjar can be reached on (571)272-4006. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

Vitali Korobov  
Examiner  
Art Unit 2155

VAK  
9/11/06

  
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